

In the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0019] on page 5 with the following substitute paragraph:

[0019] FIG. 1, taken with FIG. 2, shows schematically the elements of an automatic chemical analyzer 10 in which the present invention may be advantageously practiced, analyzer 10 comprising a reaction carousel 12 supporting an outer cuvette carousel 14 having cuvette ports 20 formed therein and an inner cuvette carousel 16 having vessel ports 22 formed therein, the outer cuvette carousel 14 and inner cuvette carousel 16 being separated by a open groove 18. Cuvette ports 20 are adapted to receive a plurality of reaction cuvettes 24 like disclosed in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/623,436 assigned to the assignee of the present invention and containing various reagents and sample liquids for conventional clinical and immunoassay assays while vessel ports 22 are adapted to receive a plurality of reaction vessels 25 that contain specialized reagents for ultra-high sensitivity luminescent immunoassays. Reaction carousel 12 is rotatable using stepwise movements in a constant direction, the stepwise movements being separated by a constant dwell time during which carousel 12 is maintained stationary and computer controlled assay operational devices 13, such as sensors, reagent add stations, mixing stations and the like, operate as needed on an assay mixture contained within cuvettes 24 and reaction vessels 25.

Please replace paragraph [0025] on page 8 with the following substitute paragraph:

[0025] Reaction cuvette load station 68 and reaction vessel load station 63 are respectively positioned proximate outer cuvette carousel 14 and inner vessel carousel 16 and are adapted to load reaction cuvettes 24 into cuvette ports 20 sideways as described later and reaction vessels 25 into vessel ports 22 using for example a translatable robotic arm 65. In operation, used cuvettes 24 in which an assay has been finally conducted, are washed and dried in a wash station 67 like disclosed in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/623,360 assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Subsequent assays are conducted in cleaned used cuvettes 24 unless dictated otherwise for reasons like disclosed in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/318,804 assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Cuvette unload station 59 is adapted to remove unusable reaction cuvettes 24 from cuvette ports 20 again using a translatable robotic arm 65 like seen on load stations 68 and 63.

The following claims are in the case, as previously presented:

1. (currently amended) A method for increasing the initial assay throughput of a clinical analyzer wherein the analyzer is initially configured such that whichever operating resources within the analyzer are throughput limiting, those resources may be incrementally added to the analyzer in order to increase throughput as incoming assay demand increases.
2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the initial throughput is limited by the availability of assay reagent resources.
3. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein additional assay reagent resources may be added to the analyzer in a first increment such that the initial assay throughput is increased by about 50%.
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein additional assay reagent resources may be added to the analyzer in first and second increments such that assay throughput is increased by about 50% and by about 33%, respectively.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein additional assay reagent resources a reagent storage area and at least one reagent aspiration and dispense arm.
6. (canceled) The method of claim 1 wherein the analyzer ~~is further~~ as initially configured also includes operating resources which are not throughput limiting and such ~~these~~ resources may be incrementally added to the analyzer ~~such that the operating resources which are not throughput limiting are also initially adapted~~ to accommodate the addition of throughput limiting resources.